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KKK

Klan Cop Planned Daley Murder, Detective Charges

By James Casey

A detective testified Thursday that Donald Heath, a policeman accused of also being a Ku Klux Klan leader, once planned to assassinate Mayor Daley.

Det. James Tobin, who infiltrated the Klan, said Heath told him early in November that he was going to aim a bazooka through the bay window of Daley's home in the Back of the Yards district.

Tobin said Heath told him also of plans to execute Deputy Police Supt. James M. Rochford and former Chicago Police Capt. James Holzman.

The detective testified before a hearing of the Police Board, which is considering whether to fire Heath for Klan activities. The board will make its decision public on April 5.

Heath was suspended when his association with the Klan was revealed in December. Two other accused Klan-policemen are awaiting hearings. Three others resigned.

Tobin, who was initiated into the Klan in September after posing as a Klan sympathizer, said Heath told him he wanted to kill Daley simply because the mayor is a top city official.

Daley said Police Supt. James B. Conlisk Jr. told him several weeks ago of the plot on his life. He declined further comment because the Police Board is still deliberating on Heath's case.

Continuing his testimony, Tobin said Heath disliked Rochford because he felt he was not tough enough in his handling of the racial disturbances in the summers of 1966 and 1967.

He said he learned from Heath that Rochford would be killed at another disturbance so that, as Heath put it, "we can blame the niggers."

Heath's gripe against Holzman was that he has "Jewish blood," Tobin testified.

Holzman already had become head of the police force in Oregon's Multnomah County (Portland) when Heath related his plot, Tobin said.

The police investigator told the hearing that the day before Heath's association with the Klan was made public, Deputy Police Supt. John Mulchrone went to the state's attorney's office to seek criminal charges against the Klan leader for his plot.

But State's Atty. John Stamos said the conversation of Heath with Tobin would be insufficient evidence for a criminal charge, Tobin continued.

During the closing moments

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of the hearing, Heath maintained that he could be loyal both to the police department and to the Ku Klux Klan.

But the assistant corporation counsel representing the police department, Jerome Zerla, replied that Heath had been using the force to recruit applicants for the Klan.

He also charged that Heath had been improving his skill with weapons and subverting the aims of the police department while he was on the force.

Earlier in the hearing, Tobin told how he had been initiated into the Klan in a ceremony in the bedroom of Heath's apartment at 2055 N. Lawndale.

Tobin said that before paying the $15 initiation fee, Heath told him that he soon would meet the top Klan leader in Illinois.

After paying the fee, Tobin said, Heath announced:

"I am the top man. I am the grand dragon. I am the only man who could swear you in."

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